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New considerations on the species of the genus *Bothriurus* Peters (Scorpiones: Bothriuridae) described or cited from the state of Paraná, Brazil and description of a new species

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description;
new species;
state of Paraná;
Brazil.

Abstract. – A new species, *Bothriurus trifinium* **sp. n.** is described from an area of Riparian wet-forests in the Northwest of the state of Paraná in Brazil. The new species can be associated with other species previously described from the nearby regions of Paraná but also from Mato Grosso do Sul and Paraguay. The description of this new species attests once again about the existence of micro-endemic populations within different groups of *Bothriurus*. Comments are also proposed on the taxonomic status of some previously described species, with one species revalidated and some synonymies suggested.

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Introduction

In several previous publications, it has been emphasized that the scorpions of the family Bothriuridae Simon, 1880 constitute a particularly difficult and taxonomically complex group (Lourenço, 2002, 2016, 2023; Lourenço *et al*., 2004; Lovato *et al*., 2021). This challenge is especially evident within the genus *Bothriurus* Peters, 1861. Originally described by Peters (1861), the genus contained six valid species by the end of the 19th century. However, these species were often difficult to identify correctly, as already noted by Kraepelin (1899), who failed to recognise several taxa that are currently regarded as valid species (Maury, 1981). A more precise definition of species within *Bothriurus*, as well as within other genera of the family Bothriuridae, became possible through the exploration of new taxonomic characters, particularly those derived from the structure of the hemispermatophores, trichobothrial patterns, and carinal morphology. This approach was first proposed by San Martín (1963) and was subsequently expanded by Maury (1971), who described several additional bothriurid species and significantly improved the classification of the family at both subfamily and generic levels.
Considering that the family Bothriuridae is largely associated with the southern faunal elements of South America (Ojanguren Affilastro, 2005), the number of *Bothriurus* species currently known from Brazil remains relatively low compared with that recorded in other regions of South America (Santos-da-Silva *et al*., 2017; Lovato *et al*., 2021; Lourenço, 2023), currently totalling about 20 species. Nevertheless, the taxonomic status of some of these species still requires further investigation and confirmation, as several taxa remain inadequately defined or in need of revision (Lourenço, 2002, 2023; Santos-da-Silva *et al*., 2017).
The number of *Bothriurus* species described from a precise region of Brazil, the state of Paraná, is noteworthy (Maury, 1981). Although Paraná state is only a political unit, it was originally characterized by a remarkable biogeographic diversity of vegetation formations (Romariz, 1953). Even though these natural formations have been severely threatened during the past 6 decades, most *Bothriurus* species have been described before the destruction of natural habitats and can be clearly associated with specific types of vegetation.
From the 1930s to the 1980s, all authors who described or revised species of *Bothriurus* based their analysis exclusively on morphological characters within a largely typological framework, without considering biogeographical evidence (*e.g.* Prado, 1934a,b; Mello-Leitão, 1945, 1947; Buckup, 1957; Bücherl, 1959a,b, 1963; Bücherl *et al*., 1963; Florez da Cunha, 1961; San Martin, 1967, 1968; Maury, 1981, 1984). Many of the taxonomic decisions proposed by

Reviewer: Elise-Anne Leguin (*Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France*) - https://zoobank.org/4E8B1C08-52E1-419C-817C-1BC059AC33EE

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these authors, in particular those of Buckup (1957), Bücherl (1959a, b, 1963), Bücherl *et al*. (1963), and Florez da Cunha (1961), were based on relatively general morphological characters that later proved to be of limited value for assessing the validity of several species. Moreover, these authors largely disregarded potentially informative characters, such as trichobothrial patterns, and did not incorporate key diagnostic features, including the morphology of the hemispermatophore.

The recent study of some *Bothriurus* specimens collected in the state of Paraná has led us to reconsider the validity of several species previously described from this region of Brazil, based not only on morphology evidence but also on their distribution patterns within the natural formations occurring in this state (Romariz, 1953). As a consequence, some previously synonymised species are revalidated and new synonymies are proposed. In addition, a new species is described from the Upper Paraná region in the extreme northwestern portion of Paraná state, near the borders with the states of São Paulo and Mato Grosso do Sul.

Material and Methods

Illustrations and measurements were obtained using a Wild M5 stereo-microscope equipped with a drawing tube (camera lucida) and an ocular micrometre. Photos of the types of the new species were produced with a Camera Canon EOS6D with a 100 mm macro lens. Measurements follow Stahnke (1970) and are given in mm. Trichobothrial notations are those of Vachon (1974) and morphological terminology mostly follows Hjelle (1990). The type specimens studied herein are deposited in the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France (MNHN) and in the Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (MNRJ).

New considerations on the taxonomic status of several species described from the Southeast of Brazil and in particular from the Paraná state.

Bothriurus bonariensis (C. L. Koch, 1842/1843 – date requiring a precise confirmation)

This species was originally described from the Río de la Plata region in Argentina (Gianbelluca, 2021) and was subsequently confirmed for Uruguay and southern Brazil. However, its occurrence in the state of Paraná has never been convincingly confirmed (Maury, 1981). It appears likely that this opportunistic species was absent from Paraná during the period extending from the 1930s to the 1960s. Consequently, the association of *B. bonariensis* with several local species from the state of Paraná (Buckup, 1957; Bücherl, 1959a) can most probably be attributed to misidentifications.

Bothriurus semiellipticus Prado, 1934 **stat**. **n**.

This species was described from the region of Curitiba. The original description was rather weak and based on a single specimen (Prado, 1934a). Its validity was however confirmed by Mello-Leitão (1945). Based on quite irrelevant characters and following the advice of Bücherl (in litt.), Buckup (1957) placed the species in the synonymy of *B. bonariensis*. For her comparative analysis she considered only specimens of *B. bonariensis* from the state of Rio Grande do Sul. The two species are clearly distinct and *B. semiellipticus* is here revalidated. *B. semiellipticus* was described from a region originally covered by Araucaria forests. Two additional species were subsequently described from this same general vegetation formation: *B. rubescens* Mello-Leitão, 1947 from Ponta Grossa and *B. vachoni* San Martin, 1968 from Palmera, Ponta Grossa, Morretes and Carambei (Mello-Leitão, 1947; San Martin, 1968). Their general morphologies appear to be extremely similar to that of *B. semiellipticus*. It is therefore possible that these taxa represent closely related populations associated with the Araucaria forests domain. However, a definitive assessment of their taxonomic status will require the examination of the available type material and additional specimens from the respective type localities. The type of *B. semiellipticus* is presently lost, whereas those of *B. rubescens* and *B. vachoni* apparently remain available (Pinto da Rocha & Caron, 1989).

Bothriurus moojeni Mello-Leitão, 1945

This species was described from the region of Iguaçu. It is considered valid and was clearly redefined by Saint Martin (1967). Its type specimen, however, has been lost. A second species, *Bothriurus zeugma* Mello-Leitão, 1945, was also described from Iguaçu, although the two species exhibit markedly distinct morphologies. The synonymy of *B. zeugma* with *B. rochai* Mello-Leitão, 1932, proposed by Bücherl (1959b), initially appears questionable, as *B. rochai* is a characteristic species of northeastern Brazil. Nevertheless, Bücherl (1959b) argued that the type locality of *B. zeugma* was incorrectly recorded as Iguaçu and should instead be Rio Grande, in the state of Bahia. If the original locality provided by Mello-Leitão was indeed erroneous, then the proposed synonymy of *B. zeugma* with *B. rochai* becomes plausible. The types of both *B. zeugma* and *B. rochai* are also lost. A third species, *Bothriurus bertae* Abalos, 1955, was described from the same region, on the Argentine side of Iguazu (= Iguaçu in Brazil). This species may likewise prove to be a synonym of *B. moojeni*; however, according to Maury (1981), the type material of *B. bertae* has also been lost.

Bothriurus illudens Mello-Leitão, 1947

This species was described from Rolandia, a mountainous region characterized by deciduous wet forests. The morphological characteristics of this species support its validity. Bücherl *et al*. (1963) subsequently described a subspecies, *Bothriurus illudens araponguensis* Bücherl *et al*., 1963, based on rather minor morphological differences. The type locality of this subspecies, Arapongas, is situated within the same mountainous environment. The absence of any obvious geographic pre-barrier between the two putative populations, which occupy the same habitat and are separated by less than 20 km, appears to exclude the existence of distinct subspecies. Consequently, only two possibilities can be proposed. (1) the observed morphological differences represent intraspecific variation, or (2) two sympatric species occur in the region. This type of distribution pattern has previously been reported in other groups of scorpions (Lourenço, 2002). The type material of both taxa is, however, considered as lost.

Bothriurus melloleitaoi Prado, 1934

This species, described from Corumbataí in the state of São Paulo, may represent a valid species (Prado, 1934b). The area of Corumbataí was originally covered by Cerrado vegetation, a savanna-like formation. The synonymy of this species with *Bothriurus signatus* Pocock, 1893, proposed by Bücherl (1959a), appears questionable, as *B. signatus* was described from Teresópolis, a mountainous region covered by humid Atlantic Forest, in the state of Rio de Janeiro. In the interior of the state of São Paulo, including the Cerrado areas of Rio Claro and Corumbataí, the occurrence of *Bothriurus araguayae* Vellard, 1934, originally described from Aruanã in the state of Goiás, has been confirmed by several authors (Lourenço & Maury, 1979). These two species, both described in the same year, may in fact be conspecific. The determination of priority would depend on the respective dates of publication. Nevertheless, in the interest of nomenclatural stability, retention of the name *B. araguayae* would appear preferable. The type material of *B. melloleitaoi* is also considered lost.

Fig. **1-4**. *Bothriurus trifinium* **sp**. **n**., male holotype (1-2) and female paratype (3-4). Habitus, dorsal and ventral aspects.

Bothriurus magalhaensi Mello-Leitão, 1937

The taxonomic position of this species, originally described from Queluz in the state of Minas Gerais, remains unclear (Mello-Leitão, 1937). This species, which was placed in the synonymy of *B. araguayae* by Flores da Cunha (1961), may in fact represent a valid species. The locality referred to as Queluz is no longer in use. The region of Conselheiro Lafaiete is associated with Mata Atlantica Forest rather than the Cerrado habitats that constitute the principal biotope of *B. araguayae*. This ecological distinction further suggests that the synonymy may require re-evaluation. The type material of *B. magalhaensi* is also considered lost.

Taxonomic description

Family Bothriuridae Simon, 1880

Genus *Bothriurus* Peters, 1861

Subgenus *Bothriurus* Peters, 1861

Bothriurus trifinium **sp**. **n**.

(Fig. 1-13, 18)

ZooBank: https://zoobank.org/0358C7AB-F783-421C-A5D7-800B6F71C80C

Holotype, Male, Brazil, State of Paraná, region of Marilena, in Riparian Forest nearby Ribeirão do Tigre, X/1963 (collected by local people). Material subsequently leg by J. Garzoni in the 1970s.

Paratypes (same data as for the holotype), 1 male juvenile and 5 adult females.

Holotype, male juvenile paratype and 3 female paratypes deposited in the Muséum National d'Histoire naturelle, Paris. 2 female paratypes deposited in the Museu Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Etymology. – The specific epithet is a Latin noun in apposition, *trifinium*, meaning a place where three boundaries meet, and refers to the tri-border region between the Brazilian states of Paraná, São Paulo, and Mato Grosso do Sul.

Diagnosis. – Adult male holotype and one adult female paratype with total lengths respectively of 27.1 and 35.8 mm,

including the telson. General coloration reddish-brown to brownish-yellow. Tegument of carapace, tergites and metasomal segments rather smooth; almost all metasomal carinae absent, with only the dorsal and latero-dorsal weak to moderate, represented by a few distal granules. Pectines with 15 to 16 teeth in males and 12 to 14 teeth in females. Telson flattened dorso-ventrally. Chelicerae with the most basal tooth on fixed finger well developed. Trichobothriotaxy of type C: orthobothriotaxic (Vachon, 1974). Chela with 5 trichobothria on the ventral aspect; internal trichobothrium on patella strongly displaced anteriorly. Hemispermatophore with a similar morphology to that of *B.* (*B.*) *guarani* Maury, 1984 and *B.* (*B.*) *pantanalensis* Lourenço & Monod, 2000 (Maury, 1984; Lourenço & Monod, 2000). The distal lamina is slightly larger and the basal portion is narrower (Fig. 16-18).

Description (based on male holotype and female paratypes) – measurements after the description.

Coloration. – Body generally reddish-brown to brownish-yellow. Prosoma: carapace brownish-yellow; anterior zone is paler, almost yellow, especially on females; eyes marked by dark pigment. Mesosoma: tergites brownish-yellow without any longitudinal or confluent paler strips; venter and sternites yellow without spots; pectines and genital operculum pale yellow. Metasomal segments reddish-yellow to slightly reddish-brown without spots but with carinae more to dark brown; telson reddish with the extremity of aculeus dark. Chelicerae yellow to reddish-yellow with diffused spots on the base of the fingers; fingers yellow with reddish teeth. Pedipalps reddish-yellow, with carinae slightly darker; granulations on the cutting edges of fingers almost blackish. Legs yellow, marbled with very light brownish spots. The single juvenile examined is much paler in coloration; pale yellow with diffused brownish spots.

Morphology. – Carapace punctate to smooth; some minor granules on the posterior edge of female; anterior margin slightly concave to straight; carinae absent; all furrows weakly pronounced. Median ocular tubercle distinctly in the centre of the carapace. Three pairs of lateral eyes of equivalent size. Sternum slit-like. Mesosomal tergites I-VI punctate without granules in male; slightly granular in female. Tergite VII with four weak carinae and some granulations on both sexes. Venter: genital operculum divided longitudinally, each half with a roughly triangular shape. Pectines: pectinal tooth count 16-15 teeth for male holotype (see diagnosis for variation). Sternites smooth to punctate, with small oval-shaped spiracles; VII without carinae. Metasomal segments 1 to IV with several carinae absent; only the dorsal and latero-dorsal are represented some strong granules, better marked on female; ventral carinae present and shaped like an incomplete arc on segment V; intercarinal spaces smooth, with scattered granules on the ventral face of segment V. Telson almost smooth in male; granular, mostly on ventral aspect on female; general granulation better marked on female; aculeus short and moderately curved. Cheliceral dentition characteristic of the family Bothriuridae (Vachon, 1963); most ventral tooth on fixed finger not reduced in shape. Pedipalps weakly to moderately granular; femur with four carinae moderate to strong and several granules on the dorsal and internal faces, better marked on female; patella with dorso-internal and ventro-internal carinae; chela smooth but not punctate; some minor granulations present at the base of fixed finger; fixed and movable fingers with a line of granules not clearly divided into rows, and 4-5 stronger internal and external accessory granules. A moderate apophysis is present on inner aspect of male chela at the base of the movable finger. Trichobothriotaxy of type C: orthobothriotaxic (Vachon, 1974). Chela with 5 trichobothria on the ventral aspect. Legs: tarsi of legs III and IV with 2 rows of 2-3 spines and several very thin setae on the ventral surface. Hemispermatophore, as in Fig. 18.

Morphometric values (mm) of the male holotype and one female paratype of *Bothriurus trifinium* **sp**. **n**.

– ***Total length*** (including telson) 27.1/35.8.

– ***Carapace***

length, 3.6/4.8;
anterior width, 2.4/3.2;
posterior width, 4.0/5.3.

– ***Mesosoma*** length, 6.9/11.4.

– ***Metasomal segments***

I: length, 1.8/2.2; width, 2.2/3.0;
II: length, 1.9/2.4; width, 2.1/2.9;
III: length, 2.1/2.6; width, 2.1/2.8;
IV: length, 2.6/3.1; width, 2.1/2.8;
V: length, 3.8/4.6; width, 2.1/2.8; depth, 1.7/2.3.

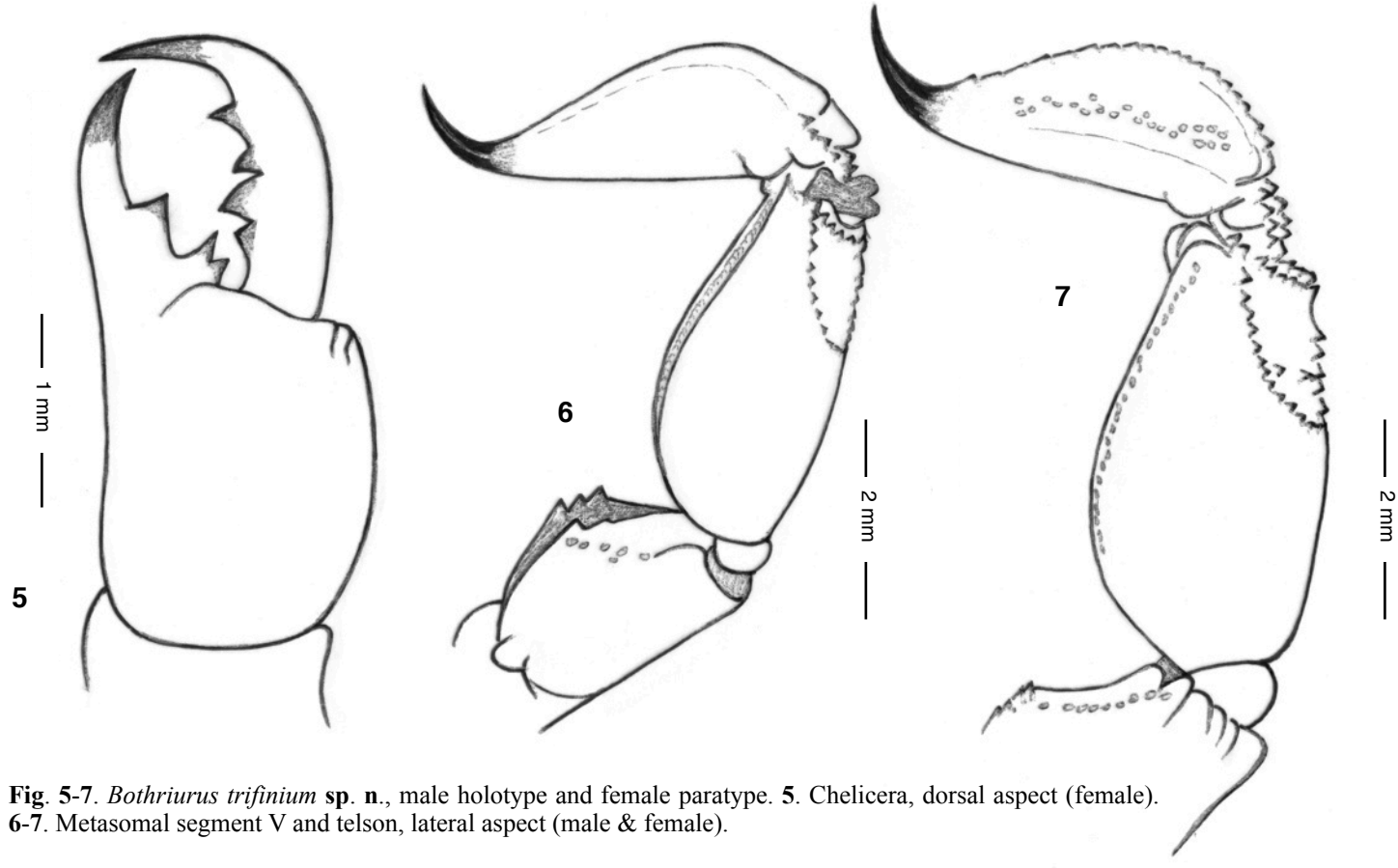

Fig. **5-7**. *Bothriurus trifinium* **sp**. **n**., male holotype and female paratype. **5**. Chelicera, dorsal aspect (female). **6-7**. Metasomal segment V and telson, lateral aspect (male & female).

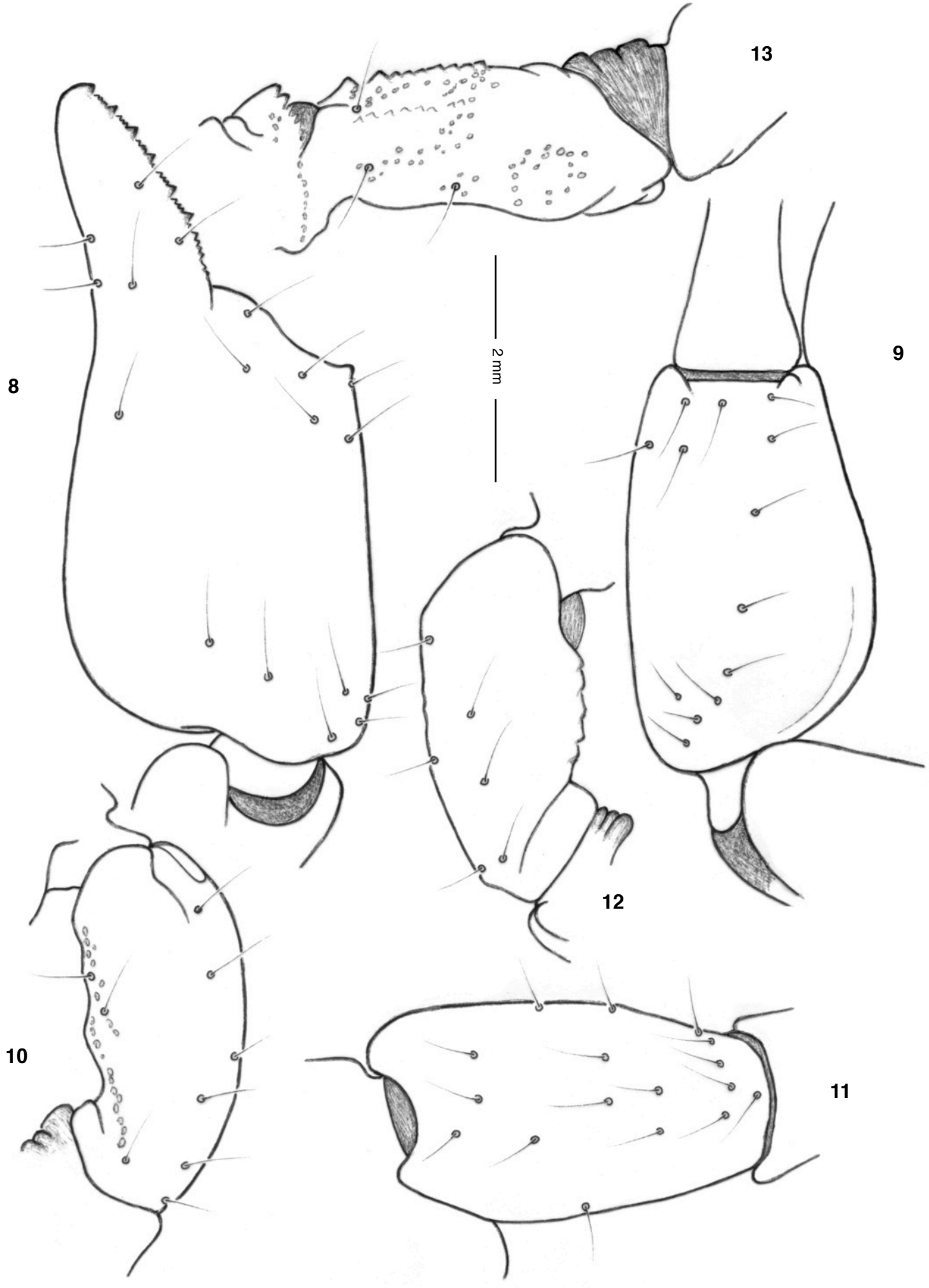

Fig. **8**-**13**. *Bothriurus trifinium* **sp**. **n**., female paratype. Trichobothrial pattern. **8**-**9**. Chela, dorso-external and ventral aspects. **10**-**12**. Patella, dorsal, external and ventral aspects. **13**. Femur, dorsal aspect.

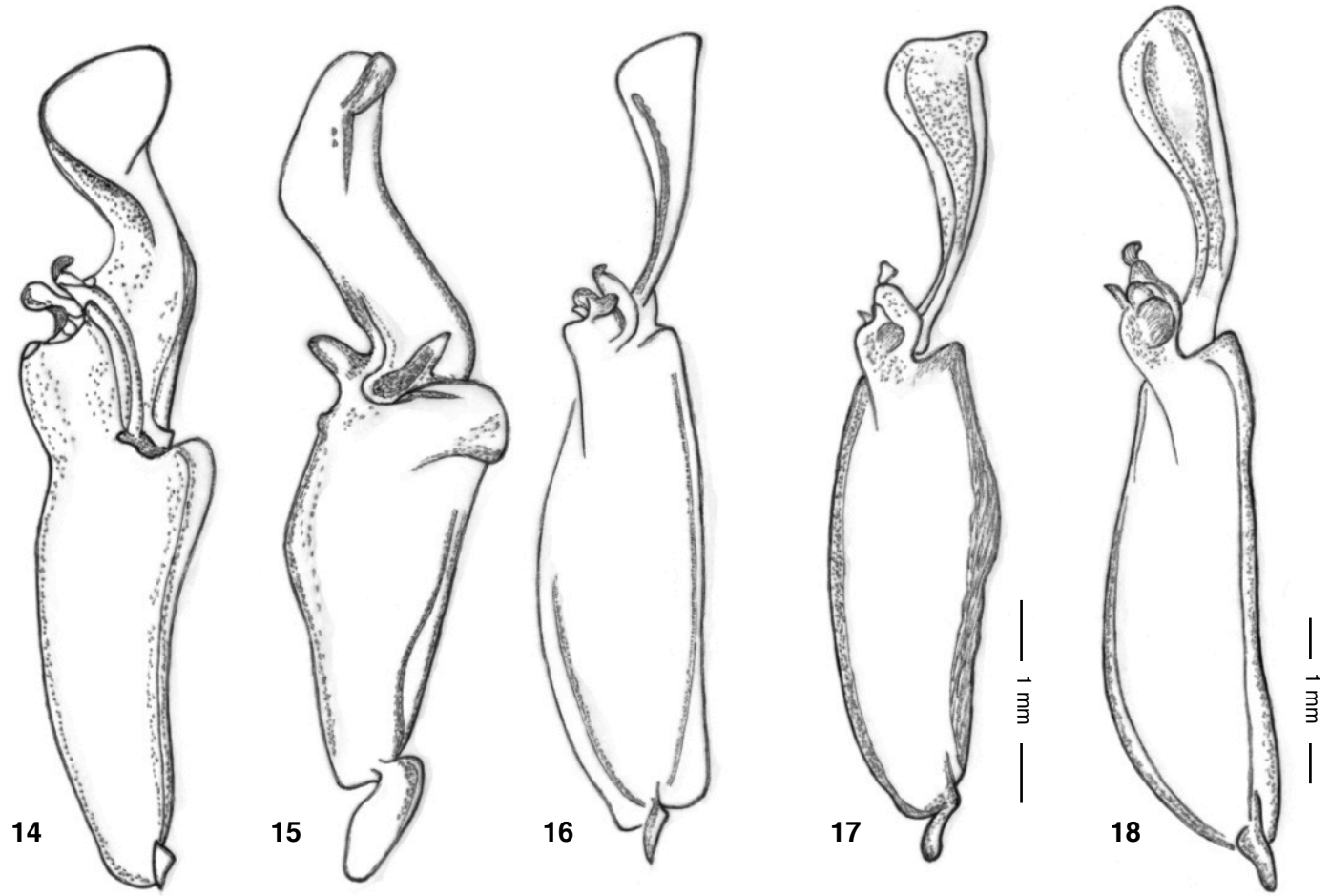

Fig. **14-18**. Left hemispermatophore, external aspect. **14**. *Bothriurus moojeni*. **15**. *Bothriurus vachoni* (probable junior synonym of *B. semiellipticus*). **16**. *Bothriurus guarani*. **17**. *Bothriurus* (*B*.) *pantanalensis*. **18**. *Bothriurus trifinium* **sp**. **n**. Figures 14-17 modified after San martin (1967, 1968), Maury (1984) and Lourenço & Monod (2000).

– ***Telson***

length, 4.4/4.7;
width, 1.8/2.2;
depth, 1.3/1.7.

– ***Pedipalp***

femur length, 2.3/3.1, width, 1.0/1.2;
patella length, 2.6/3.3, width, 1.1/1.5;
chela length, 4.6/5.9, width, 1.7/2.3, depth, 2.2/2.5;
movable finger length, 2.3/3.0.

Relationships. – The general morphology of the new species is somewhat similar to that of *Bothriurus vachoni* (probable junior synonym of *B. semiellipticus*). The morphology of the hemispermatophore is, however, quite distinct, and more closely resembles that of *B. guarani* and *B*. (*B*.) *pantanalensis* (Figs. 15-18). The new species can nevertheless be distinguished from these two species by a number of features:

(**i**) a type C trichobothrial pattern but orthobothriotaxic,
(**ii**) the internal trichobothrium on patella strongly displaced anteriorly,
(**iii**) the most basal tooth on the fixed finger of the chelicerae not reduced,
(**iv**) a hemispermatophore with a larger distal lamina and a narrower basal portion.

In addition, the habitats of the three species are clearly distinct. *B. guarani* inhabits the formations of the Chaco in Paraguay, whereas *B*. (*B*.) *pantanalensis* occurs in xeric deciduous woodland on the calcareous hills surrounding Corumbá, in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul (Ratter *et al*. 1998).

Recently, Prendini (2026) placed the genus *Brazilobothriurus* Lourenço & Monod, 2000 in the synonymy of *Bothriurus*. In our opinion this decision appears somewhat extreme. We suggest instead that *Brazilobothriurus* be retained as a subgenus of *Bothriurus*, in the same manner as other currently recognized subgenera (Lowe & Fet, 2000).

Ecological considerations on the natural environment of the humid Riparian forests in the region of Marilena, state of Paraná.

The new species is known from the region of Marilena, northwestern Paraná, where it was collected in a humid riparian forest near Ribeirão do Tigre. This locality lies within the Upper Paraná River floodplain, close to the confluence of the Paranapanema and Paraná rivers, in a region representing a transition between the Atlantic Forest and Cerrado domains (Ramos & Anjos, 2014). The original vegetation corresponds to seasonal semideciduous forest, much of which has been replaced by agricultural landscapes, with the remaining native vegetation largely confined to forest fragments and riparian forests along the Paraná River and its tributaries (Ramos & Anjos, 2014) (Fig. 20).

The habitat occupied by the new species differs from those reported for related taxa. As illustrated in Fig. 19, the known distributions of the three species are associated with distinct ecological settings. *Bothriurus (Bothriurus) guarani* is known from the humid Chaco of Paraguay, whereas *B. (Brazilobothriurus.*) *pantanalensis* occurs in western Mato Grosso do Sul, in an area corresponding to the Chiquitano dry forest. In contrast, *Bothriurus* (*Bothriurus*) *trifinium* sp. n. was collected in humid riparian forest within the upper Paraná River basin. These observations suggest ecological differentiation among the three taxa, although additional field data remain necessary to better characterize their habitat requirements.

The ecology of *B. (B.) pantanalensis* remains only partially documented. Nevertheless, the Corumbá region and adjacent Pantanal comprise a heterogeneous mosaic of vegetation types,

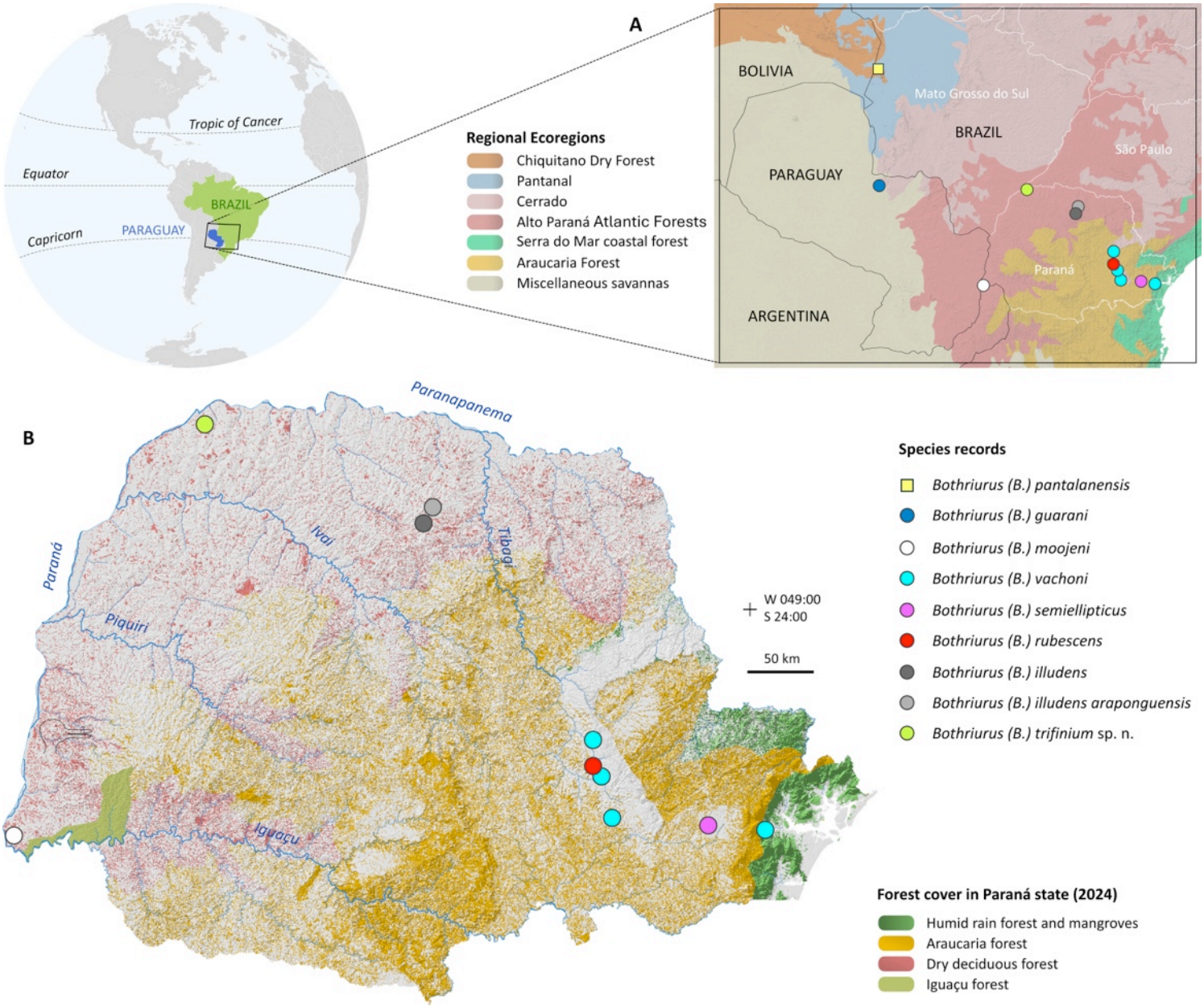

Fig. **19**. Vegetation map of Paraná and nearby regions of Brazil and Paraguay showing the distribution of the species treated in the present study.

A. Distribution records of species of the genus *Bothriurus* in southern South America, shown in relation to major regional ecoregions. Circles indicate species of the nominate subgenus *Bothriurus*, whereas squares indicate species assigned to the subgenus *Brazilobothriurus*.

B. Distribution records of *Bothriurus* species in Paraná State and remaining native forest cover in 2024. Ecoregions follow Olson *et al*. (2001) and Dinerstein et al. (2017). Dry Chaco, Humid Chaco, Paraná Flooded Savanna, Southern Cone Mesopotamian Savanna, and Uruguayan Savanna were merged as "Miscellaneous savannas" for clarity. Remaining forest cover was derived from MapBiomas Collection 10.

including seasonally flooded grasslands, savanna formations, dry woodlands, and forested habitats (Ratter *et al*., 1988; Lourenço & Monod, 2000). Consequently, direct ecological comparisons between *B. (B.) pantanalensis* and the new species should be regarded as tentative.

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Description. – WL & EY
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Résumé

Lourenço W. R., Wilmé L. & Ythier E., 2026. – Nouvelles considérations sur les espèces du genre *Bothriurus* Peters (Scorpiones : Bothriuridae) décrites ou citées pour l'état du Paraná, Brésil avec la description d'une nouvelle espèce. *Faunitaxys*, 14(56): 1 – 10.

Une nouvelle espèce, *Bothriurus trifinium* **sp**. **n**. est décrite d'une zone de forêts galeries humides, situées dans le nord-ouest de l'état du Paraná au Brésil. La nouvelle espèce peut être associée à d'autres espèces préalablement décrites des régions voisines de l'état du Paraná mais aussi du Mato Grosso do Sul et du Paraguay. La description de la nouvelle espèce apporte un argument supplémentaire en faveur de l'existence de populations micro-endémiques au sein des différents groupes de *Bothriurus*. Des commentaires sont également proposés sur le statut taxonomique de certaines espèces anciennes, incluant une espèce revalidée et plusieurs synonymies suggérées.

Mots-clés. – Scorpion, *Bothriurus*, taxonomie, description, nouvelle espèce, état du Paraná, Brésil.

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SOMMAIRE

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Illustration de la couverture :

Forêts ripariennes à la confluence des fleuves Paranapanema et Paraná, proche de Marilena, localité type de la nouvelle espèce.

Crédits:

Elise-Anne Leguin : Fig. 1-4.
Wilson R. Lourenço : Fig. 5-18.
Lucienne Wilmé : Fig. 19.
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